



Synergies for the Well Being of Society

Message to the President of the European Council Dutch and Luxembourg Presidencies Brussels, Monday June 14th, 2004

At this propitious time of European unification, the “Well-Being of Society Initiative” aims to propel Europe’s integration once again into motion.

The Well-Being Society is a project implementing one of the three core objectives of the Union, as defined in the draft European Constitutional Treaty.

A “Well-Being of Society“ agenda addresses “competitiveness” in a new way and is focusing on the three pillars of sustainable development + personal development. It is a society characterized by prosperity and quality of life, solidarity and equity, justice and universal fraternity. For Europe, it is the instrument of unity within diversity, development through education, culture and innovation in a knowledge society. It is a stimulus for innovation for new products and new services - a “creator of progress” and human security in a knowledge-based society.

This occurs at a time when, given demographic trends and the aspirations of all those living in poverty (including in the enlarged Union), the fundamental question becomes:

What kind of societal model should we have, what new types of services and products, what role for socially responsible enterprises and the non-commercial sector, in order to ensure “growth” based on well-being indicators and a true assessment of social costs?

Social spending, health system effectiveness, ageing populations, labour market trends, education, poverty and health, environment and natural resources preservation, an equitable gender perspective, social integration and respect for cultural differences and minorities, human security; these and other issues are inextricably linked with economic policy, trade, development and growth. What strategic changes should the EU Programme 2004-2009 incorporate to meet these challenges in an integrated manner and in a way that will foster a more ethical globalisation? After the “Well-fare “ and the “Neo-liberal” society models, the time has come for the reunited Europe to shape, in a global partnership framework, the “Well-being” society model

However, the methods that have been used up to now have reached their limits. Governments, international organizations, businesses and civil society cannot, with today's methods and approaches alone, succeed in meeting the objectives of the Lisbon Process. At the same time, they are currently committed to only about one-third of the effort required to achieve the objectives set at an international level in the fight against poverty. A "systemic change" is therefore required. Competition for "leadership for sustainable development" must necessarily evolve and eventually become a new "collective leadership" approach. New approaches are required for enhanced cooperation, at all levels and in every stratum of society, among public authorities, businesses and civil society.

Fields of Action.

The second think tank meeting of Renaissance Europe identified 4 fields of action or levers.

1. The new opportunities created by the Constitutional Treaty to move towards a well-being society model and tools to put Europe in motion again as a Convention III on a European contract for a "well-being society";
2. The need of a multi-stakeholder alliance, under the leadership of CEO's, Trade Unions and Civil Society Leaders, in favour of a Lisbon II Process (to make Europe the most competitive and sustainable economy in a knowledge based economy) addressing the potential of a "well-being society" in terms of competitiveness, research, consumption, industrial, social and environmental policies at EU level and in EU Member States;
3. The potential of a "Europe of Partnerships" to create the willingness to change that is an essential pre-cursor to moving towards a well-being society and the need of a "Permanent Task Force" within the cabinet of the President of the Commission;
4. The importance to address the "personal development" dimension of a "well-being society" and the vital role of education.

Request.

- A multi-stakeholder alliance, under the leadership of CEO's, Trade Unions and Civil Society Leaders is requesting a meeting to address why and how the 4 fields of action above should be reflected in the European Heads of States and Governments deliberations.
- To encourage Citizens to vote yes to the Constitutional Treaty, the European Council should, adopt a declaration similar to the Laeken Declaration fixing the mandate of a third Convention for a "European Contract for a Well-Being Society and a Participatory Budget". In the framework of their joint programme "Renaissance Europe", the Regional Environment Centre, the Progressio

Foundation and European Partners for the Environment would like to organise very soon a meeting “the 25, Enterprises and Civil Society” to

- (i) prepare with Governments proposals for a European Council Declaration playing a similar role as the Laeken Declaration did vis-à-vis the Convention II on the draft Constitutional Treaty
- (ii) define a programme of meetings in the 25 Member States, at the occasion of the debate on the draft Constitutional Treaty on the theme “Europe in motion again, the progresses in practice of the Constitutional Treaty for the Citizens and a Well-Being Society”.